



December 21, 2000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

00-32

**NEW VEHICLE LAWS TAKE EFFECT JAN. 1**

**SACRAMENTO -- Vehicle laws protecting children, passengers and pedestrians are among the measures passed during the 2000 legislative session that will become effective Jan. 1, according to the California Highway Patrol (CHP).**

**New laws include:**

**SB 2185 (Soto) requires ice cream trucks selling products in residential areas to be equipped with large signs visible from 100 feet incorporating the words "Warning" and "Children Crossing."**

**Ice cream trucks are prohibited from stopping to sell products on blind curves or on streets where the speed limit is more than 25 mph.**

**The legislation was prompted by several deaths and injuries to children who darted out in traffic to approach an ice cream truck.**

**SB 567 (Speier) increases penalties for drivers who fail to restrain child passengers in child safety seats. A violation now adds a point to a person's driving record, and the fine increases from \$100 to \$250 for a second or subsequent offense.**

**Another portion of the bill, the so-called booster seat provision, will become effective Jan. 1, 2002. It requires that children be secured in a booster seat or child passenger restraint system until they are at least six years old or at least 60 pounds.**

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AB 602 (Florez) and AB 2086 (Reyes) increase safety for farm laborers riding to work in farm labor vehicles.

The legislation bans carrying passengers in the back of pickup trucks with camper shells unless the area is fitted with approved safety belts. The bill exempts vehicles owned by a farmer or rancher carrying passengers in the back of a pickup truck with a camper shell on the farmer's lands.

All cutting tools carried in the passenger compartment of a farm labor vehicle must be stored in securely latched compartments that are attached to the vehicle.

AB 2522 (Shelley) protects pedestrians by banning a motorist from unnecessarily blocking a crosswalk.

It also prohibits removal of an existing marked crosswalk unless the public is notified and a hearing is held 30 days prior to the removal.

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The California Highway Patrol is a law enforcement and traffic safety agency reporting to Business, Transportation and Housing Agency Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet and Governor Gray Davis.